

A SERMON.

PREACHED AT THE TABERNACLE, LONDON,

MAY 24, 1796.

By the Rev. SAMUEL LYNDAL,

ON TAKING HIS LEAVE.

Taken in Short Hand by A. CANNELL.

Hosea, ch. 6. v. 3.—“Then shall we know, if we follow on to
“know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning,
“and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former
“rain unto the earth.”

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P R E F A C E.

Dear Reader,

THE following Discourse was meant for the benefit of the Congregation, before whom it was preached; and at the time the Author had no intention of its appearing in public. It was delivered extempore, and if it be not so methodically arranged as a written Sermon, yet it will be found to contain very bold and energetic language, and the most striking traits of a Heaven-taught mind. Although it is now published for a charitable end, yet it is to be sincerely hoped it will answer more purposes than one, and that the Divine Emanuel, whose blessed name it has a tendency to exalt, will give it a favourable reception to the hearts of the people.

May the supine sinner be roused, and the mourning Saint consoled. My Reader! consider this subject without prejudice. There are two things of the last importance to us all—the Doctrines and Ordinances of God, which, as Christians, it is our duty supremely

premely to love, cordially embrace, and earnestly contend for. If, therefore, the following pages should effect or increase the true happiness of one Christian—if love to the souls of domestics, dear friends, and relations—if love to our countrymen and the whole Church of God, but above all, if love to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, his doctrines and pure ordinances be promoted and expanded, the Author will have a great reward.

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SERMON.

SERMON.

MY BELOVED BRETHREN,

“WE preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a
“ stumbling block and unto the Greeks
“ foolishness—but unto those who are called both
“ Jews and Greeks—Christ the power of God and
“ Christ the wisdom of God.” It is frequently
taken for granted, that true wisdom consists in a
general acquaintance with men and things—with
heathen philosophers and fine writers. If we meet with
a man who hath studied authors both sacred and
profane.—If he hath treasured up in his memory
the beauties of the sublime Homer—If he be master
of the eloquence of a Cicero, and acquainted with the
tender figures of a Virgil—If this man hath studied
the modern Classics—If he be versed in Milton,
Young, Edwards, Addison, Hervey, and others, we
should consider him a very wise man, his mind ap-
pears to be ennobled, his taste refined, and too fre-
quently so far refined that he cannot relish the plain
simple truths of the gospel and the grace of God. I
do not mean to insinuate any thing against learning,
when it has not a bad tendency; but the common
and fatal error lies in taking learning for wisdom.
Men generally account that wisdom which is at best
a mere speculative opinion floating in the head. The
bible declares that true wisdom consists in the princi-
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ples of grace being emplant in the heart. This is the best authority to go by, and the ground of all proper distinction between learning and wisdom. And I will only say, that if we possess the latter, we shall find it will have a tendency to allay our thirst after worldly knowledge and human attainments: whereas if we have only the former, it will merely contribute to please the fancy, while wisdom reforms the heart, betters the man, and opens to his views prospects of happiness beyond the present state. True wisdom will not only do this, but it will also mortify your pride, put you out of conceit of yourself, and point you to a God in Christ Jesus. It will create in your breast such a longing after him, that the more you know the more you will desire to know of him; or, in the language of the text, you will follow on to know the Lord, daily discovering more light and life, infinite beauty and true holiness. It will transport you to a glowing generous zeal, and as it were set you all on fire, in order to quench your everlasting thirst to become better and better acquainted with God and his Christ. When men, therefore, preach and do not point out Jesus as the grand object of all wisdom, they miss the mark, and all their preaching is vain. My dear friends, you can have no wisdom like that of being wise unto salvation; you can have no knowledge like that of knowing Jesus, which will cause such warmth of affection in your hearts, such spiritual sensibility in your souls, such a deadness to the world and all its perishing objects, that you will be glad to receive him as your only hope of salvation, and, consequently, the only source of your real wisdom, your happiness and joy.

I shall only observe as introductory to the things before us, that our text and its connection, is designed, as it were, to manifest the amazing mercy and tenderness

ness of God, by way of contrast with the base ingratitude and vile idolatry of his people.

Opposites you know have a tendency to set off one another to advantage. It is virtue when contrasted with vice that shews us its horrid deformities. It is midnight darkness that makes the bright light of the morning appear so pleasing; and not to mention a variety of others; the bible in every part, and almost in every passage, especially throughout the the prophets, seems calculated to manifest the infinite goodness of God, and the infinite ingratitude of man. Sin is represented in the most destructive light, and grace, almighty grace, is represented in the most glowing colours. The human race are described as wretched and vile, but Jesus Christ is exhibited as Almighty to save, and offering salvation to the vilest of the vile. This is taking hold of one of the leading ideas of the subject, and as though Jehovah should say, Ye my professing people are guilty of every abomination; your amazing attachments to this present evil world, cause you to depart from my statutes. You are apt to fall into the most atrocious transgressions by the slightest temptation. You imbibe doctrinal errors which corrupt my truths. You flatter me with your lips, but dishonour me with your hearts. You are guilty of the grossest superstitions in worship, and you fall down before stocks and stones, and you hold communion even with Beelzebub himself. Your infinite vileness and degeneracy call for the tremendous judgements denounced by my prophets to be inflicted upon you; but my eternal designs of mercy shall stand; my mind is immutably fixed; for my going forth is prepared as the morning; and I will come unto you as the former and latter rain, and as the dew on the new mown grass.

As Israel like, too many of us, was vile, insensible, proud, superstitious, and idolatrous; reigning grace did much more abound in their justification, sanctification, and exaltation, and if you possess, my friends, the saving knowledge of God, our dear Saviour, which I have just described, it will have a tendency to mortify your corruptions, to wean you from earthly pursuits, to cure you of superstitious notions, and destroy those infidel principles which war against the soul, and strike at the invaluable glories of the gospel of God.

In considering this subject, I shall endeavour to attend to the three following propositions: First of all, to shew in what sense the Almighty Redeemer, who I conceive to be particularly introduced by my text, may be said to come to his people. Secondly, how his coming may be compared to the morning; and Thirdly, how you may know whether He has come to you as the latter and former rain on the earth.

I proposed to endeavour to shew in the first place, in what sense Jehovah Jesus may be said to come unto his people.—He is said to come as the showers of rain on the earth; and here you see the Almighty condescends to speak according to our feeble apprehensions of things, in order to let us know the doctrines of truth and of our eternal joy. The language of our text is metaphorical, and therefore philosophically improper, in representing the Deity as changing his situation, for local motion is not proper to the Divine Nature. You know God is every where—he fills immensity—he is in every corner of his vast empire at one and the same moment of time. He reigns in hell by flaming justice, and he governs with the most exact certainty throughout the prodigious space of the solar system—and will Jesus *then*, the mighty God, come and dwell with miserable men on the earth?—Behold Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, cannot contain

contain him ! Yet he takes up his abode in the broken heart, and his delights are with the sons of men. The Prophet Micah speaks of Emanuel as one whose goings forth have been from of old—from everlasting. Personality and eternal personal acts are ascribed to him.

Jehovah Jesus is also represented as coming to his people in a way of covenant mercy and faithful promise. I love in preaching the Gospel, to begin where the Almighty himself began, and that is in eternity. I am fully persuaded there is no idea more consolatory, and of greater importance than this ; and hence we find throughout the Scriptures, that when the spirit is mentioned, we are pointed to Jesus as our only hope ; and also when the Father is mentioned, in a way of covenant relation with the Son, we are shewn the mediation of Jesus with the Father ; so that Jesus is designed as the grand cause of all things. Is it not peculiarly animating to consider, that when God foresaw we should ruin ourselves by the blackest ingratitude and rebellion, he laid help on one that is mighty to save ; who, touched with the tenderest sympathy for our distresses, left the celestial abodes above, assumed our nature, and became a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; and though he was constantly employed in doing good, yet he suffered the utmost poverty and wretchedness. His visage was marred more than any man's, he was beaten, buffeted, and spit upon—and at last, like a sweet blooming flower, in the meridian of its beauty, resigned himself in the very prime of manhood, to the ignominious death of the cross, and suffered like a common malefactor ; thus magnanimously becoming a ransom for those, who had merited shame and everlasting damnation. Surely the heart of the penitent sinner must glow with gratitude, and burn with love at this affecting representation of the
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the Redeemer's sufferings and love; while the rebellious, self-righteous, and self-sufficient infidel must tremble and stand aloof at the amazing judgments of God, so solemnly and pointedly set against him in the scriptures; in all their awful and tremendous attire. Let whoever will be ashamed, I hope I never shall, in pleading the dignity of his divine character, and defending it from all the atrocious calumnies of proud infidels, pharisees, and philosophers. Oh blessed Jesus! thou formedst from all eternity thy gracious designs of mercy. Thou ever livest to plead the cause of thy people. Thou art as merciful to hear as mighty to save. Thou inspirest the drooping hopes of thy flock with increasing confidence and joy;—and thou givest thy people growing perseverance, holy magnanimity, with burning zeal. May you, therefore, my dear hearers, abandoning all hopes of future happiness, from every other source, have unshaken confidence in the dear Redeemer's blood, and be willing to be saved through the man that was slain. I expect this one principle, which is received by faith, and warmed in the heart by spiritual affection, will be my great support when I can preach no more: fixed unchangably in my mind, it will prepare me for, and support me under, the shocks of impending dissolution, and buoy up my soul in all its last agonies.

The next sense in which our covenant Redeemer may be said to come to his people, is by way of help and consolation: have you not, my dear fellow sinners, frequently found this idea true in experience? When you have felt that hideous monster, that primitive elf, called original-sin, gnawing in your bosom, and eating up the vital grounds of your hope: when you have been ready to despair on account of the corruption of your nature: has it not been matter of great consolation

consolation to you, that God has promised to justify the sinner in a way of covenant mercy; I say, when you reflect that God stands engaged to you by his most glorious essence; by all his divine attributes; by his most solemn oaths, and faithful promises, to subdue your iniquities, to bring your turbulent wills into exact unison and conformity with his glorious will,—that he is preparing to conduct you to the enjoyment of that inexhaustible mine of inexpressible joy, which was formed before the foundation of the world. Oh yes! I am sure it must, and every believer has more or less of this experience, in proportion to which he finds his old man dies away, and his prospects before him brighten up with increasing satisfaction:—to consider that God has thus engaged to deliver him in a way of federal relation or covenant love. In this manner he will animate you to surmount difficulties and dangers in your way to the kingdom. For you have not a foe, nor a corruption, you have not an internal or corporeal adversary, but the covenant necessarily implies its destruction; and, be assured, that notwithstanding all the conspiracies of men and devils, he will certainly bring you to glory.—Oh then come draw near to the throne, and let smiling mercy dawn like the morning on your benighted soul. Come ye poor, accept the treasures of the eternal covenant, the riches, unsearchable riches of our divine Emanuel.—Come ye blind, receive the all reviving light of life.—Come ye heavy laden, helpless souls, embrace the full and free salvation of the Lamb, that bled on Calvary's top.—Tremble ye obnoxious criminals. Flee, flee to the righteousness of an incarnate God, and every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters of eternal life.

God, our covenant father, is represented as coming to his people in another sense, I mean when he
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actually authorized his son to come into the world, to save sinners from sin and everlasting woe. The scriptures represent him as delighting to come and dwell with his people, reconciled by Christ's sacrifice. Luke I. ver. 76—79.

I have been much pleased with a striking idea, I found in a good writer, which I would recommend to each of you; it is extremely applicable to this part of my subject. Speaking of the Father's eternal designs of mercy, he says, It is as much as if he had come himself, when he authorized his son to come, and most undoubtedly in this sense, it was so, since Jesus is equal to his father in glory, in honour, and power. How then, my friends, shall we escape, if we despise such a Saviour? or neglect so great salvation?

When Jesus sent his holy Spirit to testify these truths in the consciences of his disciples and people, he might be said to come to them, and in this sense he may also be said to come to us; but here a very important question arises—Has the holy Spirit testified the truth of God to your consciences, and convinced you there is no hope for salvation but in his way? Put, I beseech you, this question seriously home, this morning, and beware of trusting in any speculative acquaintance with the covenant of truth; for remember, that unless the Spirit of Jesus be in you, you are none of his, and of course you have no concern in any of those blessed consequences, which result from this most glorious covenant that I have been mentioning. If you be not interested therein; you cannot reason from the declarations of God personally for yourselves, unless you feel the effects on your own hearts and consciences, which can only be when the operations of the glorious Spirit take place—I would have you take care, my friends, that your convictions

convictions and impressions be not like the blooming trees in spring, which seem fair and beautiful, and promise many delicious fruits, but how short the pleasing prospect! they decline, they wither, they die, they fall, but if the holy Spirit hath testified the truths of God to your hearts, then you are awakened to a sense of your sin, and a sense of your danger; you are willing to fly to Jesus as your only hope. You see the glory, you feel the power and purity of the gospel doctrines, as opposed to pernicious error; you are satisfied with a mediatorial religion, the best, the last, and only resource for a guilty soul. Sin to you is like the poison of Asps, a cursed law of deep rooted depravity, warring against your soul, your peace, your hope, and your God. You will rest on the Spirit for sanctification, as well as on the Saviour for salvation. You are awakened by the Spirit, and alive to God, your dear covenant Father, and you burn with a generous ardour for a display of the gospel of grace in the salvation of your dear fellow sinners.

The Almighty Redeemer comes to his people when they are waiting upon him in his house, and the means of his appointment. All those ideas I have mentioned are designed to centre here. It is in the ways of the Lord he delights to meet with his people. This is what we wish to bring you to, by our preaching, in order that you may enjoy sensible communion with God, and be enlightened in the glorious doctrines of the gospel. Men of refined ideas whose heads are full of the wit, learning, and wisdom of this world, are never willing to commune with God in the person of Jesus Christ. And why? because the God of this world hath blinded their eyes that they should not see; they can discover no beauties in the gospel scheme of salvation. They can see none of those charming traits,

traits, which were so eminently displayed in the character of the blessed Emanuel. But oh! how sweet are the ordinances of the gospel to a sensible sinner. When God says to him, Seek my face, and ye shall find it, immediately there is something conveyed to his soul, which transports him, as it were, beyond himself; something which acts in unison with the heavenly call, while the Spirit of divine love sets him on a glowing generous flame, which gives him life and beauty, melody and sweetness, energy and glory, and he mounts, as it were, on the wings of eagles, he finds that when God comes to him, it is delightful going to God.

There is another sense in which the Lord comes to his people; and that is, when he first teaches them to enjoy communion with him in a way of religious chastisement. And here let me charge you against the common error of murmuring when your covenant Father lays his rod upon you. If he permit Satan to rack your spiritual sensibility, or a ghastly distemper to eat away your vitals gradually, you are apt to conclude he is about to destroy you; but ah, my friends, you are chastened of the Lord, that you may not be condemned with the world. The severest chastisements of his fatherly love, are some of his most eminently useful visitations. Did he ever lay his rod upon you, and not sanctify you by it? Did he ever leave you to single combat in spiritual conflict, and sacrifice you to your enemy? Oh remember his faithfulness, his love, his tender mercies!—consider that he who comes to chasten, will support you under, save you from, and sanctify you by all your grievous tribulations. Disconsolate, bereaved Jacob, when surrounded by dark and mysterious Providences, was constrained to cry out, “All these things are against me,” but eventually he found that all his afflictions wrought together

together for his good. You know there are several ingredients in a medicine, which if taken specifically, would probably prove hurtful, but when they are all compounded together, by a skilful hand, they become very salutary and beneficial. So it is in taking a view of our corporeal trials, our spiritual conflicts, our fears and doubts, the terrors of justice, the judgments of providence, and the fiery darts of the wicked one; which you think have a tendency to ruin you, whereas they all work together for the good of those who love God, and are called according to his purpose, Romans viii, ver. 28. Therefore do not be dismayed; all will end well at last; though God may previously chasten you for your iniquities, your ingratitude and your impiety.

I will only observe once more, that our Lord comes to his dear people, when he raises their bodies from the silent mansions of the dead. This is a very beautiful and animating idea which the sacred prophet so wonderfully expresses under the inspiration of the spirit. Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men shall live." It seems to be (if I am not mistaken) a kind of promise to the Mediator in his mighty exertions, and the subsequent words appear to me to be the answer the Redeemer is making. Yes, "together with my dead body shall they arise." They shall be raised up by the power of my victory and triumph over sin, death and hell. "Awake and sing ye who dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead." In the verse preceding our Text it is also said, "In the third day will he raise us up and we shall live in his sight". Believer! so surely as Christ is risen, shall thy body be raised from dust to glory, from all the dishonours of corruption, to all the glories of incorruption, to bask in the splendor of the sun of righteousness for ever and ever. This is the most transporting

transporting meaning of the text. Hold on a little longer my dear believing brethren, endure your sorrows and trials for a short season. Remember that Jesus presides in every storm, that he who bought your body as well as your soul, will give you dominion over every enemy, and that you will fly from world to world, glorifying the man who bought you with his blood, and saved you by the power of his omnipotent grace. It does not appear what you shall be, but your weak, frail, cumbersome bodies of sin and sorrow, ere long shall be fair as the lilly, pure as the light, strong as an angel, bright as the sun, and lasting as the unnumbered ages of eternity. Oh consoling thought! Oh come that delightful, desirable day, whose sun shall never go down, nor any cloud obscure the lustre of its beams. When the kingdom of heaven will be opened to all believers, and Jesus will have come the second time, to our final establishment and complete happiness and joy.

If, therefore, the God of all grace come to us by his precious promises, by his co-equal Son, by his holy Spirit, by his reviving ordinances, by his fearful judgments, by his fatherly chastisements, by his strong consolations, by his almighty energy, in raising us from the grave, to regions of endless glory; what encouragement for us poor polluted; perishing mortals, to come to him in Jesus Christ. Behold, oh guilty man, thy God, thy Father, thy Saviour, thy sanctifier in thy own nature! A sympathizing friend, a merciful high priest, in the highest station, in the midst of the throne, now pleading thy cause, and lives for ever to save all to the uttermost who come to God by him; read the 7th of Hebrews.

But I must hasten to the second thing proposed, to consider how the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is compared to the morning, and as I have been
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so tedious on the former proposition I have less of your attention to employ to the sequel.

In 2 Sam. xxiii chap. 4 ver. it is declared—"He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds." Oh what a charming morning must this be! The morning light is one of the most pleasing subjects to the contemplative christian. He views the sun rising, and rejoicing to run his race, and shining in mid-day splendor, as the brightest representation of redeeming love. What is said of the sun in a natural sense, may be applied to our Jesus in a spiritual one; for as that dazzling luminary fills the natural world with light and joy, and invigorates the whole creation by his beams; so Jesus, our blessed Sun of righteousness, illuminates and animates the spiritual world with light, life, and unutterable joy.

There are five things implied in this part of my subject. When Jesus is said to come as the morning, represented under the figure in our text, it supposes that he will come seasonably.—The morning is generally esteemed the finest, the healthiest, and most invigorating part of the day; and we find, in a natural manner, that after a very dark and tempestuous night, very often a sweet, serene, and pleasant morning succeeds; so it may be said in a spiritual sense, darkness and difficulties may endure through the night of our pilgrimage, but joy and light will come in the morning; and though, my beloved, you may be surrounded by troubles and distresses, while in this state, yet remember they are only temporary, for a world of light, glory, and rest will soon make its appearance, where eternal day is connected with every hour.

2dly, You know the morning not only comes seasonably, but it comes frequently. Do you come as often to that throne of grace which Jesus has erected. How often has your Lord invited you by the endearing

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language of his love,—to come boldly and find mercy: cast away thy fears then, poor doubting soul. Is it not time to awake out of sleep? Behold the time of your salvation draweth nigh; the morning now blushes on you; all things are ready. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

3dly, When Jesus is represented as coming in the morning, it supposes the absolute certainty of his coming. The longest and most gloomy night has its period. When, my friends, you are surrounded with afflictions, and trouble after trouble is coming upon you, and you see no way of deliverance, are you not too apt to conclude that Jesus has forgotten to be gracious?—but why do you doubt his constancy and faithful love? for ere a little moment and the storm is overpast; your prospects are changed; your minds are illumined, your fears vanished, the darkness is quite dispelled, and you are filled with the light of life.

4thly, When Jesus is said to come as the morning, it denotes his gradual advances to the minds of his people in a gracious manner. “My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord, I will satiate their souls with my fatness, and fill their mouths with my everlasting praises.”—“then the righteous shall flourish as a wilderness, and the solitary place shall rejoice, and the desert shall blossom as a rose:” for when he comes, he will fill their souls with his grace, and make them fruitful in every good work; he will make them to behold his glories, taste the sweetness of his love, feel the invincible energy of his word, which are the life and strength of the soul, the source of obedience, and the foretaste and substance of glory.—When the morning of eternal purposes and promises hath, by the power of the Spirit, banished our darkness,—may we not, with triumph, conclude, that

that our light and our path will shine more and more unto the perfect day?

5th and lastly: When you consider Jesus coming as the morning,—It implies that he will repeat his visit. You do not always see the morning star gilding our horizon, but you believe it will appear again at its period. The text says, Jesus' going forth is prepared as the morning, from whence you may certainly infer the renewals of his visit. You shall not ways be in sorrow, care, and misery,—No; for he will soon come in a way of deliverance, in a way of eternal consolation to all his dear people.

I come now to the last head of my subject, to shew how you may know whether Jesus has come to you as the latter and former rain—I shall begin with the last of these first; and here I propose to you a solemn question, which if you can answer, in a satisfactory manner, to your own consciences, it will be a confirmation of a very capital doctrine—Has Jesus come to you, my friends, as the former rain? that is, have you actually felt the regenerating power of his spirit? or, are you still subject to the same lusts, ensnared by the same carnal affections you formerly were? Are you still dead to the animating doctrines of the gospel? Can you discern no beauties in the character of the blessed Jesus? Have you no relish for the ordinances of God? In short, are you still in the gall of bitterness and cruel bondage of sin? If not, it is to be sincerely hoped, that Jesus has manifested himself to you; that he has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light, and that he has actually renewed you by his Spirit. And if, my dear hearers, he has come to you, as the former rain; be assured he will come to you as the latter,—that is, he will come to you in a way of consolation and glory to all eternity. I love the doctrine of a holy man's perseverance, as exhibited in this part of
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our text, for it raises him to every perfection in the Godhead,—fits him for every consolation in his will,—for every promise in his covenant,—for every degree of majesty and glory in his character,—for every support of his omnipotent arm,—for every protection in his Providence,—for every doctrine and every grace,—for to every hope, and every happiness does *this* doctrine naturally give rise.—It is a fine blooming flower that does not stand alone, but is grounded on every principle of the gospel of God.—And if it be your happy lot believer, take it for granted, that God in Christ has brought you to the enjoyment of it, and that He, and he alone, will finally conduct you to the glory resulting from it. It must, therefore, be from a principle of divine grace in the heart, you must hold on your journey, in a way of holiness and purity, like the way of the just made perfect. Look up to Jesus, for spiritual light, make him your bright morning star, (which is one of the beauties by which he is represented in the sacred volume), that, rising from every guilt and every corruption, you advance from perfection to perfection, shining more and more refulgent, till at last you stand compleat in heaven, happiness, and God.

I have not time to consider this part of my subject, so much as I could wish; I shall only remark, Jesus says, “I will be as the dew unto Israel, and descend as showers on the grass.” xiv. Hosea and 4 verse.

Our gracious Lord, says the devout believer,—“shall come unto us as the rain,—he walks on the clouds and refreshes us from heaven above, gushing on us in a thousand streams of limpid comfort,”—and as an excellent author says, “and gently flows through every field in a tide of delight.” If the rain, which falls down from heaven on the earth, nourishes and makes it bring forth and bud; how much more productive ought our Lord’s visit to be on our souls,

souls, when he descends on them in a flame of heavenly love? And perhaps the best evidence of a practical nature, that Jesus has come to us in the sense I have just hinted, is the finding our hearts drawn out after him, after his gospel, and the ordinances of his house; for, as the loadstone attracts the needle, as fire seeks the sun, and as rivers run to the ocean, so the soul, touched with the love of God, thirsts after Jesus as his great prophet, priest, and king.

But I shall proceed to enquire, that if our blessed Lord and Saviour comes to his people in the sense I have so imperfectly explained, how and in what frame should they draw near unto him? I think it almost unnecessary to say to you, my hearers, there is no other way of coming to Jesus but as sinners, and here the question is not, how you went to God ten, twenty, or thirty years ago, but how do you come now? Do you still entertain the same high notions of the dignity of your own natures and self righteousness? are you as eager for the world and as careless about heart religion and closet devotion, as you were? If so, my friends, it is a plain proof that you have never yet come, so as to receive the least advantage, and you have been like broken cisterns which hold no water: but the way to benefit is this,—you must come to Christ, as made of his father, unto poor destitute wretched sinners, wisdom, righteousness and compleat redemption, for he is the redeemer of the guilty, the justifier of the ungodly, the sanctifier of the impure, and the glorifier of the wicked and unworthy.

Again, if you have in reality come to Jesus Christ in this way, my friends, be persuaded, fully persuaded in your minds, that it is nothing less than the effect of his having come first to you in eternal covenant mercy: thus you will have increasing light, increasing love, increasing holiness and joy. See believer! all these things are for you:—but says the worldly mind-
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ed man, what reason have you to boast? Go to the best believer this morning, and ask him, are you wise? are you good? are you very holy?—Strong in faith, alas! alas! he cannot boast of any thing of the kind, for he sees that God is so much more to be loved, than he has loved him yet; that he has still such an infinitely deal more to do; that the more he beholds of his Jesus, the more he laments his own darkness; the more he reflects on his own ability and strength, the weaker and more vulnerable he perceives himself; and that without efficacious, animating grace, he must still be utterly undone: this is the doctrine that makes the man a christian, ripens him for glory, immortality, and joy.

There are two things I leave unsaid, but there are four I shall endeavour to impress on your consciences, as they seem to me to arise from the subject already discussed. If you know by experience, any thing of the nature of this subject, it follows, as an inference from the whole, you will build on a God in Christ Jesus; you will read his word with simplicity and affection, investigate its beauties with gratitude and love, and fix it indelibly in your memories; you will dig deeper and deeper into the mines of the gospel, and in discharging these duties to God, you will illuminate your own souls, and give the mind increasing delight:

Again, you will, if you be true christians, called by the spirit, and feel the power of the truth, engage your very lives to defend it. You will never lend your ear to those erroneous, infernal doctrines, which sap the vital principles of religion, and cut up the whole foundation of our hopes for ever and ever.—Blind atheism, and boasted modern deism know nothing of a God in Christ Jesus. The former laughs at every thing of a providential kind, and believes all to be the effect of mere chance;—the latter rejects revelation, possesses a heart as hard as a stone, and is close shut against every

every tender emotion. These are the doctrines which prove so fatal to many in our day, and which it is your duty, my brethren, to resist with all your might, as they tend to destroy every thing that is sacred, desirable, and valuable.

It follows, as another inference from the nature of this subject, that every believer will have a mean opinion of his own understanding; for observe, that unless you first see you are foolish, you will never pray to be wise.—A great and learned heathen author was heard to say a little before his exit, “I have made this one attainment, that I find I know nothing as I ought to do.” And be assured, it is not all the learning in the world that can make you truly wise, or truly perfect, and do you essential good, so long as you continue ignorant of the principles of illuminating grace, which will comfort and enlighten the mind, meliorate the heart, and renovate the soul; and while men and devils attempt to ensnare, infidels to delude, and hypocrites to deceive, you will, having your mind guarded by conviction of the truth, and your affections supremely fixed, rise superior to all these mighty assaults, and be soaring towards the enjoyment of heaven, happiness, and God: therefore, whilst the Pharisee, from a fine idea of his own righteousness, thinks himself safe on his own rotten foundation; and the Deist delights in his own vain opinions; the Enthusiast in his dreams and impulses; the Formalist in the pomps and forms of godliness, do you take encouragement to persevere in the glorious race set before you in the gospel; fight the good fight of faith, that you may finish your course with joy.

You may learn from this subject, that every believer sees sin in its infinite deformity and baneful effects, in consequence of the light communicated by Jesus, as the bright sun of righteousness having appeared among us; and therefore, you see and feel there is nothing like the doctrine of the gospel; you seek Jesus

is the dearest object of your affections, and yet you are
 his free salvation? and though you are a guilty
 guilty victim, yet you do not tremble at the
 who stands exposed to the hottest displeasure of the
 mighty God.—Oh! consider what a fearful state it will
 fall into the hands of the living God, and if the
 soul, who enjoys a comfortable hope of glory, is
 to stand in the presence of the all-penetrating, all-
 seeing, and infallible Judge of heaven and earth—
 God! what must the infidel feel! When I think that
 you are in all the terrors of Thy awful majesty, and
 and incensed against him to the last degree, and
 though Thou wert about to say, “I will rid me of my
 adversary; I have born with you too long; you have
 created me with insult; you have mocked and
 profaned my most holy name; when I called by
 judgments you would not hear: I will therefore
 my self of you infidel, and you are eternally doomed
 to the most excruciating torments.” What horrors
 must seize the guilty soul at this most awful and cri-
 cal moment? Is it not enough to freeze the blood in
 the veins, to rack the frame, and fill the soul with the
 utmost anguish and dismay?—Think, I beseech you,
 poor deluded soul, on these things, and I will pray
 that the eternal mercy of the Father, the infinite glory
 and merit of the Son, and the sacred power of the
 Spirit, may save you from that wrath which shall be
 revealed hereafter. 20 SE 65

But to you, my dear fellow christians and believing
 brethren,—You who see sin in its infinite deformity
 and tremendous consequences, it shall be a most joyful
 period. You will be made happy to all eternity,
 through your once crucified, but now exalted medi-
 ator, Jesus Christ.—Depend solely on him therefore, I
 beseech you; and God grant, that we all may meet in
 glory, and unitewith the countless multitude of ransomed
 souls before the throne, to swell the triumph of
 immortal love, for Jesus' sake,—Amen.

F I N I S